

## Press Release

### Sean Scully PAN

April 30 – June 8, 2019

504 West 24th Street and 138 Tenth Avenue, New York

Opening: April 30, 6 – 8pm

Lisson Gallery is pleased to present its first exhibition with Sean Scully, having recently announced representation of the Irish-born, American artist in North America. The exhibition will span both New York gallery spaces, featuring new paintings, large-scale sculpture and works on paper at 24th Street and a focus on the artist's longstanding, but lesser known relationship to figuration at Tenth Avenue.

Sean Scully is one of the most important painters of his generation, whose work is held in significant museum collections around the world. While known primarily for his large-scale abstract paintings, comprised of vertical and horizontal bands, tessellating blocks and geometric forms made of gradate and shifting colors, Scully also works in a variety of diverse media, including printmaking, sculpture, watercolor and pastel. Having developed a style over the past five decades that is uniquely his own, Scully has cemented his place in the history of painting. His work synthesizes a thoroughly international collection of influences and personal perspectives — ranging from the legacy of American abstraction, with inspiration from the likes of Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock, and that of European tradition, with nods to Henri Matisse and Piet Mondrian, as well as connections to classical Greek architecture.

At Lisson Gallery's 24th Street location Scully will debut a new multi-panel painting, *Shutter* (2019), measuring over 17 feet wide. Painted in his signature striped style, which he developed over many years following a visit to Morocco in the late 1960s, the four-part work with alternating bands of reds, blues, greens, oranges, pinks and yellows exemplifies the artist's energetic brushstroke. Alongside this monumental painting is a diptych, *Vice Versa Green* (2019), in which vibrant blocks of abstract color are inset from one panel into another, forming a bold and alluring contrast. These paintings are in dialogue with four blue *Landlines*, Scully's now iconic series which feature only horizontal stripes and are inspired by nature's horizon line, where, as he describes, there is the "elemental coming together of land and sea, sky and land...endlessly beginning and ending." *Landlines* have become the formal catalyst for most of Scully's recent work, and the exhibition also features paintings from the series on a more intimate scale. *Shadow Stack*, a large-scale sculpture made of corten steel, further adapts the *Landline* motif, where the stacked industrial elements provide a three-dimensional representation of the paintings' gestural lines.

As a student in the 1960s, Sean Scully was looking to the German Expressionist painters and French painting of the early 20th century and as such, his earliest works were representational, often portraits rendered in graphite, charcoal or pastel. Describing the relationship of this work to his abstract paintings, Scully notes: "I am one of a small number of artists whose abstraction is based, in some way, on the memory of figuration." The exhibition at Lisson Gallery's Tenth Avenue space will include a selection of these rare early works on paper with Scully's latest paintings, which return to his figurative origins. *Madonna* paintings, based on photographs taken of his family at the beach, are on view alongside a large-scale diptych, *Boy Land* (2019), where one panel contains the familiar horizontal lines of the *Landline* series and the other is an image of his son playing in the sand, deftly drawn but retaining the loose gesture as fluid as the lines of the abstract paintings. In the center of the gallery is a sculpture, *Ten Ton Ceiling* (2017), in which standard dropped ceiling tiles from the artist's studio were cast in bronze and stainless steel—creating a conceptual "portrait" of the artist.

## About Sean Scully

Sean Scully was born in Dublin in 1945 and raised in South London. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Newcastle University in 1972. With a career that spans more than five decades, he has received numerous accolades and has been the subject of multiple touring exhibitions. In 2014, he became the first Western artist to have a career-length retrospective in China. Scully was named a member of the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 2013, and has twice been shortlisted for the Turner Prize. He has received honorary degrees from institutions such as the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston; the National University of Ireland, Dublin; Universitas Miguel Hernandez, Valencia; Burren College of Art, National University of Ireland; Newcastle University, UK, among others. A series of essays and conversations between Scully and the esteemed art critic Arthur Danto was published by Hatje Cantz in 2014, and a collection of Scully's own writing, selected speeches and interviews, *Inner*, was released in 2016.

Sean Scully's work is in the permanent collections of numerous important institutions including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada; Tate Modern, London; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg; Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; Albertina, Vienna; and Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China, among many others. In 2015, Scully oversaw a complete renovation at the Romanesque chapel Santa Cecilia de Montserrat, near Barcelona, featuring his work in dialogue with the historic architecture and restoring the church to working condition.

Current and forthcoming solo presentations of Scully's work include The Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford (*Sean Scully: Landline*, 23 February – 19 May 2019); National Gallery of Art, London (*Sea Star: Sean Scully at the National Gallery*, 13 April – 11 August 2019); Villa Panza, Fondo Ambiente Italiano, Varese (*Sean Scully: Long Light*, 18 April 2019 – 6 January 2020); LWL-Museum for Art and Culture, Münster (*Vita Duplex*, 5 May – 8 September 2019); San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice (*Sean Scully: Human*, 11 May – 24 November 2019); Instituto Cultural Cabañas, Guadalajara, Mexico (*Sean Scully: The Mexico Years*, 23 May – 29 September 2019) and the Albertina, Vienna (*Sean Scully: Eleuthera*, 7 June – 8 September 2019).

## About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Today the gallery supports and develops over 60 international artists across two exhibition spaces in London and two in New York as well as its new space in Shanghai. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, Lisson Gallery pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Art & Language, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Robert Ryman among many others. In its second decade the gallery introduced significant British sculptors, including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Anish Kapoor, Shirazeh Houshiary and Julian Opie, to the international public for the first time. The gallery represents leading international artists such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, John Akomfrah, Susan Hiller, Liu Xiaodong, Tatsuo Miyajima and Sean Scully, as well as a number of renowned artist estates, including Roy Colmer, the Leon Polk Smith Foundation and the John Latham Foundation. It is also responsible for raising the international profile of a younger generation of artists led by Cory Arcangel, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander, Haroon Mirza, Laure Prouvost, Pedro Reyes and Wael Shawky.

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